advising on such matters arising out of the administration of the Companies Act, 1956, as may be referred to it by the Government.

Filing of returns by MNCs

3042. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Company Affairs has decided against exempting MNCs from filing returns on their overseas subsidiaries;

(b) whether this move is prompted by reports that MNCs are suspected to be parking/siphoning illegal funds abroad to avoid tax; and

(c) whether the MNCs have opposed Government's move and if so, the reasons advanced by them towards continuing the exemption?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Pending matrimonial cases in various courts

3043. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of long-pending matrimonial cases in various courts;

(b) if so, whether any proposal to set-up a family court in every district in the country is under consideration;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) and (c) The Committee on Empowerment of Women in their Fifth Report on 'Functioning of Family Courts' has suggested setting up of Family Court in every district in the country. The Central

Government has accordingly requested all the State Governments and Union Territories to take steps to set up at least one Family Court in each District headquarters at the earliest.

(d) It is the primary responsibility of the State Governments to set up Family Courts in their jurisdiction. The Central Government has, however, provided for assistance to the State Governments by way of meeting half the cost of establishment and running of additional Family Courts which may be set up by the States during the year 2002-2003.

Role of ports in foreign trade

3044. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 80 per cent of country's foreign trade is transshipped at ports outside the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the loss for Indian economy as a result thereof; and

(d) whether Government have any plans to rectify this situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir. About two-third of total containers carrying import/export cargo to/from India are transshipped at foreign ports.

(b) The foreign ports at which Indian container are transshipped are located very close to international sea routes and have deep draft thereby bigger vessels frequently call at these ports. The foreign ports also have the advantage of economies of scale, which makes it viable to install modern handling equipment.

(c) On each container transshipped at foreign port, the charges for one operation of loading and unloading are incurred extra in foreign exchange. In addition, because of detour involved in transportation by ship, extra ocean freight is incurred.

(d) Jawaharlal Nehru Port on west coast and Chennai on east coast are being encouraged to emerge as hub ports capable of servicing the mother vessels to facilitate direct sailing from/to India.